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# NT 530 The Gospel of Mark

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THE GOSPEL OF MARK  
NT (IBS) 530

Asbury Theological Seminary  
Spring 2001

William J. Patrick  
Office #143

**I. General Description:**

The intention of this course, through the specific study of the Gospel of Mark, is to promote Bible study in general which is:

methodical (following orderly and self-evaluative procedure),

inductive (promoting direct personal study of the text itself that leads to an evidential approach to its interpretation),

characterized by observing and interpreting structural relationships operative within texts (observing logical and rhetorical connections and determining their influence on meaning),

characterized by observing and interpreting literary features (recognizing the literary character of Scripture and its contextual and interpretive significance),

characterized by observing and interpreting historical contexts (establishing, as far as possible, the life-setting(s) within which the text was formed and exploring its bearing on the meaning/function of the text),

theological (considering, in a broader sense, what the meaning of a passage/book may suggest about God and his activity in the world),

sensitive to the canon of Scripture and tradition (considering the relationship of a given passage to the broader context of Scripture and the history of its interpretation), and

reverent (study of the Bible with a humble mind and heart that seeks the Spirit's leading through thoughtful reflection and prayer)

**II. Course Objectives:**

A. Method: As a result of fulfilling the requirements, a student should be able to:

1. analyze, interpret, evaluate, and apply biblical passages with reasonable skill;
2. clearly describe the fundamental principles of effective Bible study.

B. Content: As a result of fulfilling the requirements, a student should be able to:

1. present a clear and thoughtful interpretation of each biblical passage examined;
2. identify and explicate the major themes and concerns of the Gospel of Mark;
3. relate theological claims of Mark's Gospel to the larger context of the Bible.

C. Attitude: It is desired that through this instructional process a student will be:

1. more deeply committed to the practice and refinement of sound Bible study as a lifelong personal and ministerial pursuit;
2. more deeply committed to understanding, living, and proclaiming the truth taught within the Gospel of Mark and within Scripture as a whole;
3. more deeply convinced of God's desire to address and transform the Church and the World by the power of his Spirit *through his Word*.

### III. Course Texts:

- A. Revised Standard Version. Any edition that gives an uncluttered text will do. NRSV can also be used. Also, the GNT can be used according to the level of one's ability.
- B. Traina, Robert A. Methodical Bible Study. Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Francis & Taylor, 1985.
- C. Bauer, David R. (ed.). Biblical Resources for Ministry. Revised edition. Evangel Press, 1995.
- D. Secondary Resources (recommended but not required; see BRM above for more extensive bibliography)

Achtemeier, Paul J. Mark. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Proclamation Commentaries. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

Anderson, Hugh. The Gospel of Mark. New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.

Guelich, Robert A. Mark 1-8:26. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1989.

Gundry, Robert H. Mark: A Commentary in His Apology for the Cross. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Hooker, Morna D. The Gospel According to St. Mark. Black's New Testament Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.

Lane, William L. Commentary on the Gospel of Mark. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

Schweizer, Eduard. The Good News According to Mark. Atlanta: John Knox, 1970.

Taylor, Vincent. The Gospel of St. Mark: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Indexes. London: Macmillan, 1952.

### IV. Requirements Regarding Assigned Lessons:

- A. On Time: Lessons must be submitted at class time, on the date given in the syllabus.
- B. Legible: Lessons may be typed or handwritten. If written, writing must be legible.
- C. Stapled: Please do not turn in loose sheets, or sheets that are creatively fastened by some other means.
- D. Cover Sheet: Provide your name, date, course, lesson number, and the amount of time spent on the lesson.

### V. Grading Policies:

#### A. Assigned Lessons

1. The ATS Catalog's description of grades and their values will apply.
2. Skipped, Late, Omitted Lessons: Each student may **skip** one lesson without grade penalty. No extra credit can be earned by doing all lessons. But, if a student does not skip a lesson, the lesson with the lowest grade will be dropped in the calculation of the final grade. A **late** lesson will be lowered by a single full letter grade (e.g. from B+ to C+), unless excused by the professor. [There is no

distinction in degree of lateness. The maximum late period is **one week**, and the number of late lessons allowed for the course is **two (2)**. Each lesson not turned in at all (aside from the one permitted to skip) will be classified as **omitted**, and will count as a zero in the numerical calculation of the grade.

3. Feedback: Lessons will be evaluated and returned throughout the semester. Students will also receive feedback on lessons during class sessions where the assigned passages are discussed in relation to the professor's presentation of material. In addition, office visits may be scheduled as needed.
4. Independence: Assignments must reflect the independent, inductive work of each student. Therefore, no resources of any kind (whether books, notes of others, conversations, etc.) may be consulted before the inductive phase of an assignment had been completed. If studying in a group, the members may not do lessons as a team, or nurse each other along with content-related guidance and suggestions. Special care, then, must be exercised to preserve the independence of each student's individual work.

B. Attendance:

The importance of class attendance can hardly be overestimated. Class sessions provide necessary instruction for the proper completion of lessons, provide feedback from the professor and peers, and supply a large measure of encouragement. It should not be surprising if poor attendance leads to poor performance in one's lessons, along with a feeling of discouragement about the course experience in general.

## VI. The Calendar

Lessons in **bold** with asterisk\* may not be skipped.

- A. **Lesson A\*** (Due Thursday Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>) [7.5 hours of independent, inductive work]  
**Read** through the Gospel of Mark, aloud, in one sitting. (**Do this twice**. Each reading can be done in about 2 hours. Resist the temptation to slow down to "study" something.) A short list of questions will be given to you to which you are to respond **briefly**. [Limit your comments to no more than **three (3)** pages.] **Note**: *Do not consult any commentaries, Study Bible notes, etc. for this lesson. This is to be your own personal engagement with the text.* **Skim** through Methodical Bible Study to get a general sense of the layout and content of the book.
- B. **Lesson B\*** (Due Thursday Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>) [7.5 hours] (Instructions for this and all remaining lessons will be distributed in a separate document.)
- C. Lesson C (Due Thursday March 1<sup>st</sup>) [7.5 hours]
- D. Lesson D (Due Thursday March 8<sup>th</sup>) [7.5 hours]
- E. Lesson E (Due Thursday March 22<sup>nd</sup>) [7.5 hours]
- F. Lesson F (Due Thursday March 29<sup>th</sup>) [7.5 hours]
- G. Lesson G (Due Thursday April 5<sup>th</sup>) [7.5 hours]
- H. Lesson H (Due Thursday April 12<sup>th</sup>) [7.5 hours]
- I. Lesson I (Due Thursday April 19<sup>th</sup>) [7.5 hours]

J.	<u>Lesson J (Due Thursday April 26<sup>th</sup>)</u>	[7.5 hours]
K.	<u><b>Lesson K*</b> (Due Thursday May 3<sup>rd</sup>)</u>	[7.5 hours]
L.	<u><b>Lesson L*</b> (Due Thursday May 10<sup>th</sup>)</u>	[7.5 hours]
M.	<u><b>Lesson M*</b> (Due Thursday May 17<sup>th</sup>)</u>	[7.5 hours]

## VII. Some Advice

Don't do a whole lesson in a single sitting.  
Work in several time blocks for each lesson.

Don't do your work during the worst hours of your day, if possible.  
Work during your peak production hours, if you know where they are and can do so.

Don't do your work around proven distractions.  
Find a place conducive to reflective study.

Don't postpone your work until the day before class.  
Begin your work earlier in the week to allow time for reflection and revision.

Don't wander through the week hoping that you will find an ideal time to work.  
Plan ahead so that you have good study time set aside in advance to use productively.

Don't start a lesson without first reading the text carefully.  
Invest up-front time in getting to know the passage well through careful reading.

Don't treat these lessons as "just assignments".  
Work diligently, pray for illumination, and expect to learn something vital in each lesson.

And lastly...

Exceptional work will exhibit these characteristics:

- Precision, accuracy, and specificity
- Attentiveness to the data of the text
- Thoroughness of interaction with the text
- Depth of observation and insight
- Freshness and independence of thought
- Clarity in expression and organization
- Balance in judgment and evaluation
- Thoughtfulness in dealing with the text's assumptions and implications
- Careful interaction with and evaluation of interpreters
- Wisdom in the use of time